

Flight Jacket

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'Evil Eyes' launch a formidable force

by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 recently completed a simulated troop extraction of low-threat areas, simulated amphibious assault ship and confined-area touchdowns, and performed numerous mountain area landings.

Prior to takeoff, eight CH-46s could be seen lined up in a row like Dominos awaiting the first step in their 80 nautical-mile round trip flight, traveling at speeds of up to 120 knots.

This type of mission is unique because it is different from Marine Expeditionary Unit training normally conducted.

According to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Kenneth D. Best, the squadron's usual missions revolve around the needs of the Marine Expeditionary Units, where only pieces of the squadron's total assets are used.

Typically, the squadron's training focuses on the manual require-

ments of up to four aircraft. It is this kind of training that builds the squadron up for these kinds of large flight operations.

"This exercise is being used to hone our skills," said Best. "There is a real art to lifting off this many helicopters. This large amount of flight experience will be used to support what is known as, 'theater battle.'"

With depot-level maintenance complete on a number of the aircraft, Best plans to fly these large formations at least once a month through the year 2000.

With the maintenance behind them and being able to have most of their aircraft up and running allows room for other aspects of the training other than building on the pilot and their crews skills. "Mostly, these flights are a big motivator for the troops. They really like to see all of the aircraft turning at once," said Best.

As if on cue, red and white twinkling lights on the aircraft

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photo by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

HMM-163 sent eight CH-46s on an 80 nautical-mile round trip flight, traveling at speeds of up to 120 knots. The mission simulated troop extraction out of low threat areas and gave the eight-helicopter formation a forum to complete a simulated amphibious assault ship touchdown while simultaneously performing numerous mountain area landings and confined area touchdowns.

New plane destined to change face of Hercules community

by Pfc. Jenn Manning

PAO, MCAS Cherry Point

MCAS CHERRY POINT, N.C. — The KC-130 Hercules or 'BattleHerc' as it is often called by those who fly it, is known for being reliable, dependable and steady like workhorses of long ago. In spite of the superb maintenance it has received, most Hercules have flown long past their prime — some have been in service for as long as 37 years.

It is now time to retire some of the oldest aircraft in the Marine Corps' inventory and make way for the next, technologically-advanced, generation of Marine assault transport aircraft — the KC-130J.

The changes from the current model are dramatic. "Just about everything is different," said Lt. Col. Bill Franchi, Fleet Introduction Team officer-in-charge. "The avionics are all digital, it has a glass cockpit and state of the art instrumentation. The propulsion system uses the same engine as the MV-



photo courtesy of Lockheed-Martin

The new KC-130J, a new and more advanced model that will eventually replace the existing model. It has a six-bladed propeller system and its engines are similar to those of the MV-22 Osprey.

22, producing more power and the new six-blade propeller is approximately 32 percent more efficient. The new propulsion system gives you greater range and improves the capability to support contingency operations. We can get there faster, go farther and carry more on the way. It also has a heads-up display and is the first large military aircraft of its type to have one."

The HUD allows the pilot to focus outside of the aircraft. The components of the HUD are a glass

screen or combiner glass which uses a holographic reflective layer to improve view and an overhead unit which projects information required for flight, navigation and aerial delivery on to the combiner glass.

At the heart of the KC-130J's advanced digital technology are the two mission computers which process and monitor all aircraft, flight, navigational and tactical functions.

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MCA relies on involved membership

by Renaldo R. Keene

Marine Corps Association

Reprinted with permission of MCA

QUANTICO, Va. — The Marine Corps Association, the professional association of Marines, is expanding its bookstores and awards programs to assist in enhancing the professionalism of active duty and reserve Marines and to recognize their professional and educational accomplishments, according to Gen. Terrence R. Dake, MCA President and Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

General Dake, in a recent letter to MCA members, stated the MCA, which has for 87 years provided service to Marines, has recently opened a bookstore at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and is planning on opening another at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in addition to the one at Quantico, Va. He said there will also be "regional MCA representatives at the major Marine Corps bases and stations. These individuals will assist units with their awards programs, help facilitate guest speaker programs, and other professional development programs."

The MCA has been expanding its awards programs for several years now. "The greatest increases are in support of the corporals courses and the Marine and NCO of the Quarter programs. Said Dake, "In 1999, we gave out awards totaling more than \$73,000. This year, we will continue to expand our awards program for academic distinction, writing excellence, professional achievement, and meritorious performance."

He pointed out that the MCA book service, which provides professional and reading materials and books, as well as quality Marine-related items and birthday ball supplies, also has improved its accessibility by placing book and gift catalogues on the MCA Web site, at www.mca-marines.org, and offering customers the ability to order via e-mail at bookservice@mca-marines.org.

The general's letter to association members states:

The Marine Corps Gazette and Leatherneck magazines continue to be the cornerstone of the MCA.

The Gazette, since 1916, the

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Corps takes aim at heart disease

by Lance Cpl. Travis A. Gannon

PAO, MCB Camp Pendleton

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Each day about 700 Americans die of heart attacks before they get to the hospital, according to the American Heart Association's Web site at www.americanheart.org.

In light of those statistics, the Marine Corps published Marine Administrative Message 072/00 to promote cardiovascular fitness for a healthy heart. The intent of the message was to increase awareness of the benefits of physical fitness.

The heart, like any other muscle, strengthens with exercise. Certain exercises increase cardiovascular fitness by improving blood circulation throughout the body, according to the AHA. Cardiovascular fitness allows a person to exercise vigor-

ously for long periods of time without tiring.

Cardiovascular fitness can reduce the risk of heart disease, according to the association. A strong heart does not have to work as hard to circulate blood through the body. Cardiovascular fitness allows the heart to do more with less, said Sonja Hallworth, 14 Area Fitness Center's fitness manager said.

"It allows the heart to pump more blood with less beats," she said. Regular physical activity performed several days a week reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of death in the United States, according to the message. Specifically, physical activity reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes and high-blood pressure.

Cardiovascular workouts reduce a person's stress, blood pressure, body fat and heart rate, Hallworth said.

Types of exercise that will strengthen the heart and build cardiovascular fitness are aerobic activities involving large muscle groups. Examples include jogging, brisk walking, swimming, bicycling and jumping rope, according to the AHA.

"I prefer to see people using a variety of exercises," Hallworth said. "Performing the same exercises every day will stress the same muscle groups, which may or may not lend to a balanced workout. A variety of exercises will help to give an all-around workout. For example, if you're a runner, it is good to counter that with some biking.

"If you are doing various activities, you are less likely to get injured. What happens is, the body becomes efficient at what it does regularly, so it isn't training your body to the same extent.

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Flight Jacket



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PMO K-9 unit takes a bite out of community relations ...



photo by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

Lance Cpl. William L. Abbott, a dog handler with the K-9 unit here, is being taken down by Robby, in front of 300 4th, 5th and 6th graders at Ramona Elementary School, during Career Day, March 2. Robby is a Belgium Malinois and part of the K-9 unit here. The Marines offered a lot more to these kids

than just a great show, according to **Leslie Pequegnate**, the school's vice-principal. "The Marines are really proving to be positive role models in the community. It also makes the children aware of the Marine Corps as a career opportunity," she added.

Lifelong Learning Center offers myriad of opportunities

Courtesy of Education Center

MCAS Miramar

The Education Center is a part of the Lifelong Learning Center. The Education phone number is (858) 577-1801. The fax number is (858) 577-1800.

The Center's hours are Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The library phone number is (858) 577-1261.

Marines are reminded that neither the library nor the education center answers the phones for the other because the library and the education center are in separate parts of Building 5305 (the old dining facility).

The Education Center offers numerous educational related programs, one such program is the Military Academic Skills Program. This is an on-duty program for active-duty service members that is designed to help build reading, communications and

mathematics skills. The program can help improve job skills and possibly improve a Marine's General Technical Score on the Armed Forces Vocational Assessment Battery. Marines can call or visit the Lifelong Learning Center to find out more about this program.

Another service offered to Marines is Tuition Assistance which is outlined under Marine Corps Order 1560.25B. TA is limited to active-duty service members. TA pays 75 percent of tuition and the USMC Voluntary Off-Duty Education program.

However, TA does not include paying for High school completion.

There are two caps on TA. The annual TA cap is \$3,500 per Marine and the per credit cap is \$187.50, which would be paid on a \$250 or higher cost per credit course. Other restrictions also apply.

Marine Corps Order 1560.25B prohibits

the use of TA for test preparation. Many schools and businesses offer test preparation courses – and frequently at a very high cost.

TA must be requested using the Navy Marine Corps 10883 form. The form is submitted to a Marine's unit commander for approval. After the commander has approved the form, it is submitted to the education office prior to the start of the class.

The education office enters the TA request in the Navy/Marine Corps automated system and gives the student a signed hard copy of the contract. The student signs the contract and delivers it to the school.

At the end of the course the school sends an invoice to Pensacola, Fla., to collect the government portion (75% up to \$187.50 per credit and \$3,500 per year) of the Marine's TA. For additional information, see next week's *Flight Jacket*.

Retention

Commanding Officer is key to career planning

Editors Note: The following is the first article in a three-part series, excerpted by 3d Marine Aircraft Wing Career Planner Master Sgt. Steven R. Lewis, from a memorandum written March 4, 1985, by Lt. Col. S.G. Rogers, USMC (Ret.), the head of the Enlisted Retention Unit at Headquarters, Marine Corps, Washington D.C.

Compiled by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Present day, Marine Corps Career Planners are working tirelessly to retain its skilled Marines. Though Rogers was writing from a different time, his article is still relevant and may give a new perspective on the critical ongoing need to retain the Marines currently serving on active duty.

A reenlistment sale is probably more difficult than recruiting a Marine because we are facing a knowledgeable and perhaps skeptical Marine. A career planner can't gloss over aspects of the Marine Corps the Marine sees as definite drawbacks to remaining on active duty. All of us have bad days, weeks, or tours in our Marine Corps experience, but it is because the balance of good outweighs the bad that we have stayed.

It has been said so many times, and borne out in so many inspections, that it must be true: "The key to a successful career planning program is the personal involvement of the commanding officer and through his example, the participation of the officers and staff noncommissioned officers of the unit." Units with the active, energetic involvement of the commanding officer invariably have successful career planning results. Those that do not, do not. Why, if it is as simple as

this, do so many commanders remain detached from retaining their quality Marines? Possibly for the same reasons that so many Marines claim to have never been counseled on their fitness reports. Despite our reputation for dynamic can-do-let's-get-the-job-done leadership, many Marine officers are just not good at counseling deficient Marines or overcoming objections of Marines who state they will not reenlist. This is not a revelation; it is just human nature. People avoid doing what they don't do well or have never been properly trained to do, especially where there is no positive feedback.

Inspection results and exit surveys of Marines leaving the Corps indicate that as many as 25 percent of these Marines never received a commanding officer's interview. Many more receive only a perfunctory screening interview with little or no attempt to overcome their stated intention to separate. Many of these grandiose plans are easily overturned if the commanding officer takes the time to explore the pitfalls and stress the benefits of staying Marine. Yet, often no one forcefully asks the Marine to stay.

Many officers take it as personal disapproval when Marines say they are leaving the Corps, and shy away from interviewing those who seem to already have made up



photo by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

Maj. Gen. M.P. DeLong officiated the reenlistment of Gunnery Sgt. Troy R. Couron, 3d MAW protocol chief, and his wife Sgt. Margarita Couron, a MAG-11 Marine Air-Ground Task Force planner, as 3d MAW career planner Master Sgt. Steven R. Lewis looks on. The general gave his unequivocal blessing on the reenlistment of the Couron's and expressed his pleasure in being able, "to keep both of these fine Marines in."

their minds. This avoidance of rejection is no different than that of a proud Marine recruiter who can't handle high school kids telling them to "take a hike".

Both situations require the same remedy, an increase in counseling skills. We have to train our officers on how to counsel their Marines and how to sell the benefits of staying in the Marine Corps, especially in an improving economy where at first light, civilian alternatives may appear to be more attractive.

The career-planning situation of today

closely resembles the recruiting service of the early 1970's. Relying on the easy walk-in traffic of the draft era, recruiters were unprepared to compete in the marketplace when draft motivated volunteers evaporated with the end of the draft. The recruiting service had to quickly teach itself how to compete in the quality market.

Until now, career planners have been able to take the easy route, processing those

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preceded a huge rush of exhaust fumes as the powerful engines roared to life. In unison, 16 rotors burst to life with a flurry of activity, and beat the air like a disturbed nest of locusts.

Quickly, the aircrews moved into the gullets of the pulsating metal beasts. Like a horse chomping at the bit, the lurching helicopters now seemed anxious to get under way.

The sensation inside the CH-46 seems to be how one would feel strapped on top of a washing machine filled with an unbalanced load during its spin cycle. The “wuub, wuub, wuub,” sound is constant, loud and seems to reverberate through the entire skeletal structure of the human body.

But strangely, the helos lift off the deck gently. There is no surge in the speed or pressure as they take off. It is a seemingly effortless lift of the metal beast.

The mission took all eight helicopters as far north as El Toro, over the ocean and past the unusually lush and green rugged peaks and valleys entrenched in the interior of MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The multiple landings and takeoffs happened without a hitch. The refueling stop-over on the airstrip at Pendleton was art in motion as the refueling crews gave each of the rumbling beasts a sizable quantity of fuel.

In the last peaceful moments of the exercise all of the pilots boarded their planes while their aircrews stood a short distance from the reach of the sloping blades.

“I’m really glad I got the chance to go. You don’t get to see this very often, it’s kinda special,” said HMM-163 CH-46 crew chief Cpl. Scott W. Marler

MCA, continued from page 1

Professional Journal of the U.S. Marines, currently has a circulation of more than 31,000. Unique among military magazines, “the Gazette” provides a forum for professional discussion and debate of current issues facing the Marine Corps. “Leatherneck,” the “Magazine of the Marines” since 1917, has a circulation of more than 90,000.

A reader’s digest for Marines, “Leatherneck” continues to tell the Marine Corps story — past, present and future with its own unique style, making it, according to some, the best magazine of its kind.

Both magazines have active Web sites, gazette@mca-marines.org and leatherneck@mca-marines.org, that provide samplings of the current issue and other timely information. Readers’ comments are always solicited and may be directed to the appropriate magazine from the Web pages.

Additionally, the MCA continues to work on its insurance plans to provide the best possible coverage and policies for its members. The family term policy, introduced last year, affords “tremendous coverage for Marines and their families.” It is a family plan that covers spouses for one premium and covers family members for a minimal additional cost. Dake explained that “long-term care insurance has also been well-received by the membership. Participation has steadily increased as members address their changing insurance needs in preparation for their senior years.”

MCA officials say that the Association offers other items, from personalized printing and stationery to conference capabilities and even credit cards. “I believe there is still

more to do in order for our membership to grow,” said Dake. Last year, sales from various MCA endeavors exceeded \$1.3 million.

However, more importantly, MCA membership reached 85,129 and is continuing to grow. “We have set a goal to increase our membership by 20 percent over the next five years.”

General Dake invited all members to become involved in the MCA by writing articles for the magazines and participating in membership services.

The Association welcomes suggestions from all over the Corps and from the Marine Corps family. Send them via e-mail or by writing: Executive Director, Marine Corps Association, Box 1775, Quantico, VA, 22134, or calling toll-free (800) 336-0291, Ext. 303/304.

KC-130, continued from page 1

The two, independent mission computers send information to the HUD electronic unit which then converts the information into the required symbols for viewing by the pilots.

“They are basically taking an analog plane and turning it digital,” said Sgt. Lawrence Dean, FIT team communication/navigation technician. The mission computers also significantly enhance the maintenance effort.

“Troubleshooting time on the aircraft should be cut in half,” said Master Sgt. Terrance Jones, FIT team maintenance chief and power plants technical advisor. “The aircraft is controlled by two computers, everything goes through them. This will allow you to get fault codes and do more intensive trouble shooting. To do maintenance, you’ll have to use a portable maintenance aid — a laptop computer.” The PMA plugs directly into the aircraft and downloads information from the mission computers and retrieves stored flight data from a removable memory module, as explained by Master Gunnery Sgt. Robert Caldwell, FIT staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge and the team’s flight engineer.

Additional improvements found in the KC-130J are: night vision lighting, improved aerial refueling capability, a high-speed ramp and door system that allows the ramp and door to be opened at 250 knots vice 150 knots during an aerial delivery mission and fuel tank foam in the wings to improve survivability.

Team members agree all of the new systems improve the plane immensely. The new model has 29 percent more thrust, a 40 percent higher cruise ceiling, 40 percent more range, 21 percent more speed, a 25 percent increase in fuel offload capability and takes 50 percent less time to climb.

With all the new features, the KC-130 community has to undergo conversion training. The FIT team, which includes two pilots, three aircrew, a navigator, and five maintenance personnel, has already been trained on the J-model. The maintenance training curriculum has already been developed and is currently under review at Marine Aerial Refueling Transport Training Squadron 253. The transition to the new planes shouldn’t be difficult for some of the Marines who are already working on the older model aircraft.

“Young men and women coming up nowadays are use to computers in the home,” Caldwell said. “They have grown up with computers and for them it will be a very easy transition.” Fleet Replacement Enlisted Skills Training at VMGRT-253 will begin

maintenance training on the J-model in April 2001. The FIT is working on a seven-week aircrew conversion training syllabus that will include 30 days of ground school and 28 sorties in the KC-130J.

Training Marines on the new J-model will still be conducted at VMGRT-253 FREST, but the day-to-day KC-130 maintenance at the squadron will be contracted out to civilians.

“VMGRT-253 will become contract maintenance, opening up jobs to the civilian community,” Franchi explained. Distribution of the new aircraft will be a slow but steady process over the next few years. The first planes will go to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., for developmental testing and will arrive here in July 2001. By 2012 all the aircraft should be delivered to Marine Corps squadrons.

Despite the changes, not everything can be done with computers. “You still need wrenches even if things are done with computers,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Creech, airframes technical advisor, FIT team. The J-model will bring the KC-130 into the new millennium with all of its new technology, but its reputation as a workhorse in the sky will never change.

Heart disease, continued from page 2

The best way to change that is by varying the time, intensity or types of activities a person is doing.”

It is important to beware of overtraining as well. If you do not allow your muscles to rest and rebuild, you may exhaust or injure yourself.

Aerobic activities depend mainly on energy derived from the consumption of oxygen. They increase the body’s need for oxygen by challenging the heart and circulatory system to meet the need.

“Physical inactivity has been established as a major risk factor for the development of coronary artery disease,” the AHA said. It

also contributes to other risk factors including obesity, high blood pressure and a low level of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol.”

Nutrition is also an important factor in health and fitness. Nutrition has an impact on heart health and physical fitness. Your body, like a car, won’t work right if you don’t have the right fuel.

Nutrition suggestions include limiting fat intake to 30 percent of calories (saturated fat less than 10 percent, polyunsaturated fat up to 10 percent and monounsaturated fat 10 to 15 percent of fat calories), cholesterol to less than 300 milligrams and sodium to fewer than 2,400 mg per day.

“There’s so much out there, and everyone is different,” Hallworth said. “A lot of competitive athletes work best on high carbohydrate diets. Each person has to find, within the food pyramid, what works best for them.”

Typically, nutritionists suggest 50 to 60 percent carbohydrates, 12 to 15 percent protein and below 30 percent fat.

“A lot of times people don’t eat enough, or at the proper times. Many people skip meals or they may only eat one meal a day. It’s usually a big meal because they are so hungry. This only lowers the metabolism, which is the opposite of the desired effect. It’s better to eat four or five smaller meals.”

Nutrition and physical fitness go hand in hand in remaining healthy. Physical fitness also has several other benefits, such as reducing the risk of heart attacks; strengthening heart, lungs, bones and muscles; giving more energy and strength; helping control weight and blood pressure; easing stress, sleeping better, looking better and feeling better.

Enhancing readiness for the challenges of the 21st century requires that all Marines, from the youngest private to the senior commanders, be proactive in enhancing healthy lifestyles and reducing health detractors for a fit and ready force, according to Marine administrative message 072.



photo by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

Countdown to lift off ...

Aerial gunner Staff Sgt. Lance B. Gibbs, with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 watches helicopters during their simulated amphibious assault ship touchdown, while communicating with his commanding officer, Lt. Col. Kenneth D. Best. Past Gibbs are rows of “Evil Eyes,” looking toward the runway. The “Evil Eyes” on the aircraft are part of a tradition that dates back to

March 9, 1966, during the evacuation of A Shau Forces Camp near the Lao-tian border during the Vietnam War. The “evil eyes” were painted on as a special good luck charm and the only bullet-free helicopter from that mission was the one bearing them. According to Best, all of ’163’s helicopters have sported the evil eye marking ever since.

‘Briefly’**Pistol Range opens for recreational use**

Saturday marks the grand opening of the new MCCA Recreational Pistol Range. Pistol rentals and ammunition will be available for 45’s, 9mm’s, 38’s and 22’s, or bring your own shoot’ in iron! Cost is \$4 per person and \$3 pistol rental if needed. The pistol range is located near Duffy Town in East Miramar. For more information, call 577-4099.

H&HS hosts golf tournament

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron is hosting a golf tournament Friday to raise money for the Marine Corps Birthday Ball. The tournament starts at 7 a.m. and will feature competition between teams. For more information, call 577-1153 or 577-4490.

Graders needed

Scripps Ranch High School is seeking Marines to help evaluate student projects. Presentations will be April 25-27, and May 1-3. Presentations are given each day during the following times: 7:30-9:30 a.m., 9:30-11:30 a.m., and 12:15-2:30 p.m. For more information, call (858) 621-9020 ext. 7109 or e-mail rengle@mail.sandi.net.

Telecommunications Center moves

The station Telecommunications Center moves to its new location in Building 7494 today. The move will not affect routine message traffic.

Association to host dinner

The local House of Puerto Rico Association is dedicated to teaching people about the Puerto Rican culture. Meetings are held the first Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. at the Hall of Nations in Balboa Park.

They are also hosting a paella dinner March 26 from 2-6 p.m. The paella dinner is part of a fundraiser for museum construction. The cost is \$30 and anyone interested in the meetings or the paella can call (858) 481-2995 for more information.

Essay and art contest available

The Armed Services Young Men’s Christian Association is sponsoring its annual essay and art contest for children of service

members. The theme is the importance of reading and the contest deadline is March 31. The art contest is open to children in kindergarten through sixth grade from all the branches of service both active duty, reservists and guard components, as well as DoD civilian employees. The theme is “My military family.” For more information, visit the Armed Services YMCA Web site at www.asymca.org or call Krisie Collier at (619) 232-1133.

Driver’s Improvement course offered

The Driver’s Improvement Course is a requirement for every Marine under the age of 26. The course lasts all-day and is offered several times a month. The next classes will be Tuesday (remedial), March 28 and March 30. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Saunders at 577-1358.

Free tax filing available

The base Legal Assistance Office is offering free state and federal electronic tax filing and tax assistance, to all active-duty service members, their family members, and all retired service members. The Tax Center is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. The center is located behind the flight line Jet Mart store, adjacent to the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing Headquarters building on Schilt Ave, Building 2110. For more information, call 577-8315.

Did you know ...

Visiting nurses working of the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society will make home, hospital or clinic visits? They provide health education and instruction while acting as a liaison with other resources. During 1998, the Society’s 33 Visiting Nurses conducted more than 37,000 patient visits, offering emotional support in times of stress; assisting patients’ understanding of medication, diet and follow-up care; and providing continuity between patient, doctor and community resources. Ask about feeding newborns, postpartum care and parenting skills.

For more information, contact your nearest Navy-Marine Corps Relief office at 577-1807.

Women in the Vietnam War: Sacrificed, survived

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Women, in combat, hah! Since the Civil War women have managed to find themselves in the thick of the battle. Some disguised themselves as men, others went as nurses and some just went.

Yet the major difference today is, officials aren’t sure just how many women were there and what they did. In the Vietnam War alone, roughly 2.5 million men served and over 58,000 were killed.

It is now estimated almost 10,000 women served in Vietnam and eight female service members are recorded as being killed.

There were also numerous women involved in relief organizations, who gave their lives to fight communist oppression thousands of miles from home.

There were women Marines, more than 500 Women’s Army Corps representatives, roughly 600 women from the Air Force, and 6,000 Army, Navy and Air Force nurses and medical specialists and volunteer organizations.

Women served in administrative assignments, in hospitals, on medivac crews, as information officers, in service clubs headquarters offices and in other clerical, medical, intelligence and personnel positions, according to the Web site, <http://userpages.aug.com>.

“Women suffered the same hardships as the men. In many cases they were often in

the line of fire from rockets and mortars, particularly during the Tet Offensive. They sloshed through the same mud and blood as the men, witnessed the same horrors of war and suffered the same ignominious treatment and indignities upon their return to the country that sent them there,” according to the Web site.

Despite the danger they faced—sometimes on a daily basis, these women were not allowed to carry weapons to defend themselves, according to the Web site, <http://www.salon.com>.

Because of the shame and animosity or for whatever reasons, many of the women Vietnam veterans remain unknown and faceless. “For eight years, my husband didn’t know I was a vet,” said Agnes Feak, who participated in an air evacuation of the American and Asian children, Operation Baby Lift.

“I kept my mouth shut when I came home. He found a photo of me in fatigues and said, ‘who’s that?’ And I said, ‘That’s me.’”

In recent years, the role of women in Vietnam has gotten some attention. With books by women who served and research done by historians, more information and services are being offered to these veterans.

When other people scoff at women in combat, one should consider women have been a part, and in some cases an integral part, of many conflicts and wars. From being nurses and administrative specialists to taking a bullet, they have been there.



Rotor blade paintings recreate



photos by Staff Sgt. Jean P. Montes

(Far left) A painted blade done by Staff Sgt. Jean P. Montes, a Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 environmental safety specialist, shows the groundside melding with the Wing, as helicopters fly off from dropping infantryman. (Top photo) Montes chose to illustrate an infantryman's life by showing different elements of his life from swimming through swamps to battling personal injury. (Top middle photo) Montes shows one of many blades he has created for Marines and others in the past five years. (Second middle photo) High mountains brush the sky and cactus reach up toward the sun on the surface of a truck's tailgate. This desert scene shows some of the variety Montes has when painting. (Bottom middle) For some, particular places have special meaning. This blade depicts South East Asia and some of the roles Marines played there.





reate Marine Corps history

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

A scene of hardship, struggle, glory, commitment and death come alive on the surface of a helicopter rotor blade. These images represent a Marine's life and will be immortalized by a Miramar Marine on the metal blade of the aircraft he worked to support.

Staff Sgt. Jean P. Montes, a Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 environmental safety specialist, has been recreating pieces of a Marine's history onto rotor blades for the past five years.

Montes began his unique hobby while overseas. He was approached by another Marine, who wanted him to make a stencil, so the Marines could decorate a rotor blade. Montes offered to not only make a stencil, but to paint the blade. Ever since

that moment, Montes' skill has been in demand.

Though his blade painting began five years ago, Montes has been involved with several aspects of art, such as pottery, jewelry-making and drawing.

However, though painting a blade is similar to working on canvas or painting anything else, Montes says there are several steps that differ with rotor blades.

Before he can start painting, he has to clean nearly a quarter of an inch of grease off the blade and sometimes, he has to even sand it down. The blades he uses are being thrown out because they are no longer usable, so they are often in bad shape, said Montes.

Once the blade is clean, he can lay down primer, which serves as a base coat, keeping the paint from running and it helps to make the surface smooth. Once the primer has been applied the fun begins as Montes creates his metal masterpieces.

Although it is fun, the painting can be difficult, especially trying to make everything blend together, so no one thing stands out more than another, said Montes.

He does not rely on sketches or other aids to provide a basis for the work he does on blades, instead he paints it as he sees it, his mind flowing images together much like seeing a movie being played out — with each blade being its own movie. “By the time I'm done, it has taken on its own personality,” he said. From the first step to the last, Montes can spend any-

where from two to eight hours making one blade. The time varies depending on how complicated and detailed the blade is.

Regardless of how long it takes or what is painted, Montes charges the same price for everyone, \$100. “I can't justify charging more for something that was being thrown out, so I'm only charging for my artwork,” said Montes.

However, another reason for the relatively inexpensive price is so everyone from a lance corporal on up can afford a blade if they want it.



Critically speaking

‘Rules of Engagement’ gets an oohrah

by Lance Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Deep in the jungles of war-plagued Vietnam in 1968 Marine Capt. Hays Hodges (Tommy Lee Jones) and Marine Capt. Terry Childers (Samuel L. Jackson) lead their platoons through a maze of plantations in search of Viet Cong. The realistic boom of the explosions and bang of the fire arms give you such an adrenaline rush you’re not sure whether to watch the movie or take cover. At the toss of a coin, Hodges finds himself full of bullet holes and his entire platoon massacred. Childers’ cunning spared his life.

Twenty-eight years later, Childers, now a colonel, is ordered to lead his Marines to Yemen to evacuate Ambassador Mourain (Ben Kingsley) and his family. When the so-called non-hostile Yemen turns out to be just the opposite and after three Marines are killed, Childers orders his Marines to open fire. As they mow down the crowd with M-16A2s and Squad Automatic Weapons, a great feeling of satisfaction seems to come over you. You might actually think to yourself, “It’s about time they fired back”.

After the smoke clears, 80 Yemen men, women, and children lie scattered on the ground bloody and lifeless, not one pistol or

rifle of the dead is to be found leaving you thinking maybe Childers was delusional.

As the camera roves over the mangled bodies of young children, your stomach tightens and you begin to view Childers as a monster. Obviously this incident caused an uproar with the people of Yemen and the United States. The only piece of evidence clearing Childers’ name is a video tape from a surveillance camera that was mounted to the wall in front of the embassy. The evidence is destroyed before anyone can view it. But that doesn’t matter because National Security Advisor William Sokal (Bruce Greenwood) believes Childers has to take the fall or the entire United States will.

However, you get the feeling there is more to it than that. Sokal seems to be more worried about his job coming into question. From his introduction into the movie, Sokal takes on somewhat of a villainous role. He gets the best lawyer the Marine Corps has to offer, Maj. Mark Biggs (Guy Pearce), to prosecute Childers. Biggs, a young, yet seasoned lawyer, who is truly out for justice, tears at the case like an angry pitbull.

Childers looks to his old Vietnam buddy, Hodges, at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., for legal help. Hodges now a colonel and a mediocre Marine Corps law-

yer in the process of retiring is called upon by Childers to defend him. Hodges, lacking confidence in himself as a lawyer, takes the case.

A better cast couldn’t have been found for this movie. They each brought their specific characters to life, you couldn’t distinguish between the actor and the character being portrayed.

“I think the script invites you to think about some pretty serious issues of the illusive nature - right and wrong. About the things we ask our military to do. What we ask them to go into. The chaos, the conflict armed with their experience and the rules of engagement in which they’re suppose to adhere to. Out of that chaos, when those rules don’t apply, how fair is that?” Greenwood said. Training for the movie roles with actual Marines was apparently a learning experience for the cast.

“We went off on forced marches.

We crawled on the ground. We ran. We dove over things. We did a lot of stuff. You know, I played war a lot when I was a kid because I watched war movies, but it was nothing compared to what we did,” Jackson said.



The movie gives an accurate account of today’s politics in the military. Director William Friedkin did a great job of bringing James Webb’s, a retired Marine and former Secretary of the Navy, story to the big screen.

Marines see new side to mechanics in hobby shop

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

The base Auto Hobby Shop recently completed a four-month renovation project to meet Marine Corps Air Station Miramar’s growing population and growing demand for the facility’s use.

Nearly \$345,000 was spent adding a large, lighted carport, five additional vehicle lifts and workbenches. The carport allows Marines to work during the day or night, as well as during inclement weather, said Mike Young, Auto Hobby Shop manager and mechanic.

Roughly 700 Marines use the facility every month, said Young. With such a large number of Marines using the facility each day, a waiting list for use of the vehicle lifts had to be used to accommodate everyone. However, the additional lifts have nearly eliminated the need for a waiting list, he said.

The Auto Hobby Shop is open Tuesday-Friday from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m., and from 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on the weekends. The facility is staffed with four mechanics each with a range of technical expertise. Their collective experience exceeds 40 years, said Young.

“We can handle any automotive trouble shooting,” said Young. Aside from having mechanics on-hand, the Auto Hobby Shop also has most tools and equipment Marines need to do anything from an oil change to installing an engine. Major repair jobs like replacing brakes can be done at the shop a lot cheaper and Marines can get assistance with repairs from the mechanics, said Young.

“It’s well-staffed and well-equipped. The mechanics do whatever they can do to help out,” said Gunnery Sgt. Jeff Johnson, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 ordnance noncommissioned office-in-charge, who was installing an engine into his Cor-

vette Stingray.

Marines who want to learn more about repairing their cars can attend a basic automobile maintenance class. Classes are held every month on the second Tuesday from 6 -7p.m. at the Auto Hobby Shop.

“What our class is trying to promote is awareness that a car needs routine maintenance (i.e. oil change), what kinds of things need to be done, and what a Marine can learn

to do it by himself,” said Young.

When buying a new car, Marines can bring in the car they think they want to buy before they purchase it and the mechanics will look it over.

The mechanics can tell what damage, if any was done, if anything is in disrepair, and sometimes how the car was driven, adds Young. For more information call 577-1215, ask for Mike.



photo by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

A Marine uses one of many new vehicle lifts that were recently installed in the base Auto Hobby Shop, as part of a major renovation project to meet increasing demands and use of the facility.

Get fired up ...

by Gary Saunders

MCAS Miramar Safety Officer

More than 4,500 Americans die each year in fires and more than 21,000 are injured. The majority of these occur from smoke inhalation and breathing super-heated air. The vast majority of these fires occur in the home.

There are time-tested ways to prevent and survive a fire. It's not a question of luck. It's a matter of planning, practicing and teaching.

One method of protecting your home is by having smoke detectors. Marines should follow these safety measures:

- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas.

- Test every detector at least semi-annually, maybe in the Spring and Fall when you reset the clocks. Also, replace batteries with new ones at least once a year.

Plan and practice your escape

- Plan at least two escape routes from each room. Yes, you may need to purchase a roll up ladder. The night you need that ladder will make it seem like a cheap investment.

- Practice and feel your way out with your eyes closed.

- During a fire, you have to get out fast. You may have just a minute to get out before the smoke, gas or fire kills you.

- You do not have time to call the fire department or to collect valuables.

- Teach your children to get out quickly. Children are often so scared that they will hide.

- To leap out of bed and stand up may lead to certain death with the first breath of super-heated air. Within minutes, the temperature from the fire can exceed 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit 5 feet from the floor while the temperature on the floor is still cool enough to escape. Crawl, never walk or run. The poisonous smoke and extreme heat of a fire can kill you.

- Stay low to avoid the rising heat and smoke.

- Agree on a fixed location out doors where family members can gather for a head count.

- Stay together away from the fire. Call 911 from a neighbor's home. Make certain that no one goes back inside the burning building.

The most important investment you can make is your time. Teach and train your family. Make it fun or offer an incentive for mastering the plan. Believe it or not, I have done just that and it is a great rainy day family activity.

Have your family members lie on their beds and when you yell "FIRE" or press the test button on the fire detector, have them roll out of bed and begin to crawl on the escape route. This is where you get to have fun, because you have blocked the escape route. They must now go to the alternate escape route. Be certain children understand by quizzing them on those items you cannot simulate.

Teach them what to use and how to break a window to escape if the window will not open. This should include placing a pillow or blanket over the jagged edges before crawling out. Be sure they understand why they must crawl. Above all, be sure the experience is fun!

Seatbelt safety

Auto accidents can be a tragic legacy: *Buckle up*

by Michael Wilbon

Washington Post Columnist, reprinted with permission from The Washington Post

This morning I got into my car, buckled my seat belt and drove to work.

To many of you, that's the most ordinary act in the world. But it's brand new to me. I am 41 years old. I've been driving since I was 17, which means for 24 years I didn't wear a seat belt. Never, ever.

Okay, in the 34 months that I've been married, my wife has harassed me into wearing my seat belt on the occasions she has been in the passenger seat. But even then, sometimes I wouldn't fasten it. Just wouldn't, not for any reason. I probably thought it was uncomfortable. The reason, or my perceived reasons, don't matter because any perceived reason is too dumb to defend. Still, I didn't wear a seat belt.

Earlier this year, I felt guilty about it for the first time when my 10-year-old goddaughter, Brittany, hopped into my car for me to drive her to soccer practice and said, "Uncle Mike, why aren't you wearing your seat belt?" I was embarrassed, but not enough to wear it once she got out of the car.

I do wear a seat belt now, however. I put one on the other night in the front seat of a taxi in San Francisco. Sometimes it takes me a few minutes to remember; last night I was halfway home from Baltimore Washington International Airport when I realized I wasn't wearing one and immediately strapped in. There's only one reason I wear my seat belt

now: Derrick Thomas. He suffered a paralyzing — and eventually fatal — injury Jan. 23. I voluntarily put on a seat belt for the first time Jan. 24.

Thomas is hardly the first person to be paralyzed or die because of injuries from an automobile accident. Graveyards and hospitals are full of them. Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, where Thomas died Feb. 8, is full of patients who are there for the simple reason that they weren't wearing a seat belt when they were involved in an accident. It happens every day. But clearly, this one struck something in me and I know beyond a shadow of a doubt I'm not alone.

I didn't know Thomas very well; I had talked to him a half-dozen times during his National Football League career. He was a towering figure in Kansas City because of his Third and Long Foundation and because he was one of the people, he was accessible. He took money from his pocket and paid for trips, funerals and hospital stays. People all over Kansas City, and for that matter his native Miami, have stories of Thomas being a do-gooder.

I'm not going to sit here and deify Thomas because he did some stuff a man shouldn't be proud of. He might not have had the virtue of, say, Arthur Ashe; Thomas was flawed. But aren't we all? If you weigh the good stuff and the bad stuff, Thomas comes out better than a whole lot of folks. And the sad, cold truth of it is, his death is waking up a lot of people on the issue of

seat belts.

It's a shame a man who already was prone to good works had to die in the prime of his life in order to help bring about radical and necessary change. But Thomas probably has saved lives already. I know he has. If a defiant fool like me will buckle up, I know others have, too. People pay attention to what celebrities do. Is that sad? Sure. But, good or bad, it's a fact in this culture. Out of all the people in the world who have met a terrible fate because they didn't wear their seat belts, Thomas hit home to me. Thomas has grabbed me, shaken me, and made me do what my wife, mother and goddaughter couldn't. I hope everybody else who doesn't wear a seat belt is as shaken.

The Kansas City Star, quoting a federal highway study, reported that six of 10 children killed in traffic accidents are not buckled into their seats. And of those six, medical experts contend three would have survived if they had worn their seat belts. Of 432 accident fatalities in Kansas in 1998, 331 (76 percent) were not wearing their seat belts. The Star reported that of the 1,025 people thrown from their vehicles in 1998 in accidents in Missouri, 841 (82 percent) were not wearing seat belts. Here's the stat that really matters: In the car Thomas was driving (too fast for the conditions, we are told), one passenger wore a seat belt and received only minor injuries while the two who did not died.

See **Seatbelts**, Page 11

Semper Fit educates Marines on STD/HIV dangers

MCCS Semper Fit Division has scheduled an informational and educational sexually transmitted diseases/ human immunodeficiency virus brief, March 28, 8 – 9:30 a.m. at the base theater. This brief includes a special guest speaker: Michelle Angle, a recovering drug addict who has been living with the AIDS virus for 12 years. The brief will include representatives from Medical Prevention and Legal to discuss STD/HIV issues. DoD civilians, military spouses, retirees and all ranks are invited to attend. STD/HIV Awareness is a mandatory topic for Semper Fit training requirements and this is an excellent opportunity to train your unit personnel or civilian personnel. Upcoming events from the Semper Fit Health Promotion Section are:

April:
STD/HIV Awareness Month

April 9, 6 a.m.-6 p.m.
Alcohol Free Weekend '00
April 25, 8 - 9:30 a.m.

May
Fitness Month
May 23, 8 - 9:30 a.m.
Sports Injury Prevention Brief
May 24, 8 - 4 p.m.

June
Health Fair – Fitness Center
Sports Injury Prevention Month
June 10, 11 - 1 p.m.
National Drug Walk
June 27, 8 - 9:30 a.m.

For more information, contact Anne Panattoni or Staff Sgt. Wallencheck at 577-4157 or 577-7963.

Battle of the DJs

The Battle of the DJs returns to the E-Club on St. Paddy’s Day, today. Wanna-be DJs (amateurs only) are invited to battle it out to win a paid contract to DJ at the E-Club.

All participants will receive souvenirs, and top DJs will win great prizes, including gift certificates for CDs. If you haven’t signed up yet, don’t wait another day! Advance sign-up is required to participate, so call 577-1936. For those who’d prefer to dance rather than spin, the fun starts at 8 p.m., with no cover before 9 p.m. A \$2 cover will be charged after 9 p.m. It’s all happening at Area 51, the E-Club.

Parents’ Night Out

Parents – it’s St. Paddy’s Day! Why not enjoy a “Green Evening” out? Sign up your little “leprechauns” today for Parents’ Night Out tonight. Call Youth Activities, 577-4136.

Get some money

The Miramar Officer’s Spouses Club has college and technical scholarships for high school seniors, graduates and family members of Miramar active duty service members, as well as family members of retired or deceased service members who reside in the Miramar area.

Children are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 USPA/IRA scholarship; the application deadline is March 31.

Four \$500 MOSC-sponsored scholarships are open to all eligible family members; the application deadline is April 15. Don’t delay!

Applications are available from high school guidance counselors or by sending a request with a self-addressed legal-size envelope to Miramar MOSC, Attn: Lynn Holtzhouser, Scholarship Chairperson, 1413 Delta Road, San Diego, Calif. 92126.

Free MCCS

Movies

•**Today:** *The Hurricane (R)*, 6:30 p.m.; *Play It to the Bone (R)*, 9:15 p.m.

•**Saturday:** *Galaxy Quest (PG)*, 6:30 p.m.; *Supernova (R)*, 8:30 p.m.

•**Sunday:** *Galaxy Quest (PG)*, 1:00 p.m.; *Next Friday (R)* 6:30 p.m.

For more information, call 577-4143

Seatbelts,
continued from page 9

A spokeswoman at Jackson Memorial told me yesterday that spinal injuries are down, and hospital officials are certain it is as a direct result of an increase in seat-belt use.

Now, we tend to frame discussions about anything involving an athlete to athletics. Is this a matter of an athlete somehow feeling physically invincible? Maybe. Am I a case of a sportswriter feeling physically invincible? We've got to be careful with these sweeping generalizations. Having said that, I'm trying to figure out if people who don't use their seat belts have any great similarity, beyond stupidity.

At the same time, I'm trying to digest the federal study that says African Americans and Hispanics are a lot less likely to buckle up than whites. The only thing I can think of, lame as it is, is that whenever I was shamed into buckling up in the past, I felt weak or vulnerable in a way I didn't like. I think that feeling is dangerously common among men, that anything that suggests vulnerability is something many of us instantly reject.

While it's no excuse, I come from a culture of disdain for seat belts. My father didn't wear his. The men I came of age with didn't wear theirs. Examining why is something that federal authorities may wrestle with as

they try to figure out the cultural dynamics and how to encourage people to wear their seat belts and comply with seat-belt laws.

Every state ought to be like Iowa, where police can stop somebody who isn't wearing a belt (77 percent conform) as opposed to those where people can be stopped and ticketed only if they are stopped for some other violation.

I can't answer why. It's not even important to me anymore. The important thing is that there are no more excuses forthcoming. No more "It's going to wrinkle my clothes." No more, "Suppose I needed to jump out because the car caught fire." No more "Shut up, I don't feel like wearing it." No more, "I'm only going to reach 20 mph going around the corner to the grocery store."

I'm done with being stupid, at least on this issue. Like a lot of people, I have Derrick Thomas to thank. And mourn.



Reenlistment,
continued from page 3

Marines who surrender themselves at the career planner's office instead of actively pursuing the best quality Marines. Almost by definition, the best Marines are those who will also have the most alternatives in the civilian sector.

As we continue to watch our best Marines walk out the door without a fight, the Marine Corps will end up retaining the lower end of the quality spectrum and perpetuating the chronic shortages in our technical skills. We need an aggressive career planning program where every quality Marine is actively prospected for reenlistment. Steps to field a professional career planning force are ongoing.

This represents a good beginning, but the commanding officer plays a pivotal role in this approach, first by creating an environment where Marines want to stay Marine, and just as importantly by showing their personal interest in each Marine coming to end of active service. As simple as it sounds, it just isn't happening in far too many units throughout the Marine Corps.

Ironically, Marines will extend when asked by the commanding officer to make one more deployment with the unit because the unit needs them, but no one asks them with the same intensity to reenlist because the Marine Corps needs them.

The reasons for this inability of many officers to relate to their Marines on a personal level can be traced to the foundations of our basic leadership style. It is hard for an authoritarian officer to accept the possibility of failure in a counseling environment, especially when he or she has no formal training in counseling skills. In many cases, the prospect of failure appears to jeopardize the commanding officer's view of his own authority.

The recruiting service and career planning force have been successful using sales and counseling training packages purchased from the Xerox Corporation. Officers who have completed these training courses are very enthusiastic about their benefits and have adopted these skills into their basic leadership style.

Despite the above discussion, the commanding officer does not have to be the primary salesman in the reenlistment effort. That is the function of the professional career planner, but the commanding officer does need to be knowledgeable in career planning matters, able to discuss a Marine Corps career in terms that are meaningful to the Marine, and most importantly willing to ask the Marine on a personal level to make a commitment to a Marine Corps career.

Next Week: *The Art of Conducting Reenlistment Interviews.*